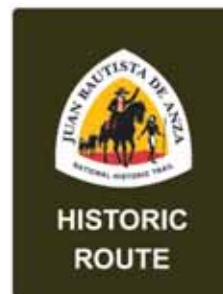


Driving the trail

Drivers in Los Angeles County may have already noticed the distinctive trail markers that identify the historic route. In 1776, the expedition used the easiest passes through the area. These in turn became the roads we use today. The driving route attempts to follow as closely as possible the historic trail which, in Los Angeles, is marked by the Riverside, Golden State, and Ventura Freeways. Outside of the county, the trail follows a variety of state highways, two-lane and dirt roads. All are passable with a standard vehicle. In general, bicyclists are prohibited on the interstates but along the 5 and 101, there are recreational trails that run parallel to the route which are open to bicyclists.



Driving Route Sign



Hiking and history

Los Angeles River - The recreation route from the de Anza Gate at Los Feliz and traveling west to Griffith Park provides a wonderful opportunity to contrast the peaceful river valley with Interstate 5. You can continue west on the trail approximately 3 miles before retuning to Los Feliz via Griffith Park. You may also continue east on the river for another two miles along the bike path. Horses, hikers and bikers are all welcome.

San Gabriel Mission - The Anza Expedition rested here after making their trek across the desert. The mission, plaza, and museum all interpret the early Spanish period in California and the role the missions played in helping to

settle California.

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area - Although the Anza Expedition followed what is now the Ventura Freeway, the park offers a recreational trail which provides landscapes very similar to those seen by Anza.

Calabasas Pageant - The last Saturday in April, performers from the community of Calabasas relive the passing of the expedition through the area with an annual pageant. Picnickers and travelers can stop off at Juan Bautista de Anza Park, take a short hike along the interpretive trail, and read up about Anza and the Chumash people that he encountered here.

Contact

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail was created by Congress in 1990 to commemorate the epic journey of colonists from Mexico to San Francisco. The trail is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with public and private partners. For information about the trail, contact the trail superintendent at 1111 Jackson, Oakland California, 94607. Or call 510 817 1438. (English); 510 817 1323 (Spanish). You can visit the trail website at www.nps.gov/juba or at <http://anza.uoregon.edu>.

Exploring the Anza Trail

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The Juan Bautista de Anza
National Historic Trail



Los Angeles County



Los Angeles River



A trailside park



Trail volunteers

More than a trail

It was over 200 years ago that a band of a few hundred soldiers, farmers, and children first used the Los Angeles River as their corridor to travel from the San Gabriel Mission to the Pacific Coast at Ventura. Having spent months crossing the deserts of Arizona and California, the abundant water of the *Rio de Porciúncula* was a welcome site to these settlers.

Today's traveler along Interstate 5 will not initially see the river in the same way that the Anza expedition saw it. Before modern highways and flood control channels forever changed the waterway, diary entries from the trip describe the river as a "great deal of water and, running toward the Bay of San Pedro, spreads out and is lost in the plains a little before reaching the sea. The land was very green and flower strewn." But with a little bit of imagination and a quiet moment in just the right place, today's hiker on the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail can experience a bit of the same wonder that greeted these historic travelers.

From Mexico to the San Francisco Bay, the Anza Trail commemorates the contributions of California's first non-native families. With the hope of establishing a presidio on Spain's northern frontier, they set the groundwork for the thousands of settlers that would one day arrive and claim California as their own.

Using the Los Angeles River corridor, various city and county parks, and the Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area, a trip on the Anza Trail today can bring urban hikers back in time. Whether it's a bike trip along the river near Griffith Park, a seat at the annual Anza pageant in Calabasas at Juan Bautista de Anza city park, or a trip on horse back in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the Anza Trail offers a refreshing sense of wilderness and history in a region that is often defined by concrete and development.
